

Iraqis to help them to sustain this newfound freedom by helping the strengthen their armies.

The stories of success from our soldiers and sailors in Iraq need to be told. Our soldiers need to know that their bravery and hard work in Iraq is not in vain.

This new chance for freedom in this part of the world is due entirely to the sacrifice of our soldiers and sailors, and their families.

I say to our servicemen and women and your families—Our nation owes you our gratitude, and we honor you for bestowing the immeasurable gift of freedom. We thank each and every one of you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Pennsylvania for talking about what our people with boots on, on the ground in Iraq, are saying and what they are seeing.

I think it is important that we talk to them about the feelings in America because some people might get a misimpression if they listened to people who actually put forward the idea that we would cut and run from something that was started for all the right reasons—to protect Americans.

The President, knowing what happened on 9/11, was determined that he was not going to have another terrorist attack on America with weapons of mass destruction. That is why we went into the Middle East. We took on Saddam Hussein, who was known to have, from many different sources, weapons of mass destruction.

So we are there, and our troops are doing a great job. We are building the confidence in Iraq. You can see it from the people who are voting with their feet. They are walking to the polls and voting. Even under threat of death, they are working to establish a democracy. They are defying the terrorists. They know what the terrorists are doing to their country, and they are fighting back. And we are going to stand and fight with them, as we promised we would do.

I want to talk about this picture. It says more than any words ever could. Michael Yon is a former Green Beret who has been out of the service for years. He is also a gifted photographer and writer. He was embedded in Iraq for 9 months earlier this year. He learned about the area, the people, the unit in which he was embedded, and the situation in Iraq. His photographs capture an honest and inspiring message about our soldiers' service in Iraq, the mindset of the terrorists we are fighting, and what this war is all about.

I would like to read Michael's own words describing what happened on Saturday, May 14, 2005, in Mosul, just before he took this heartbreaking picture:

Major Mark Bieger found this little girl after the car bomb that attacked our guys while kids were crowding around. The sol-

diers have been angry and sad for two days. They are angry because the terrorists could just as easily have waited a block or two and attacked the patrol away from the kids. Instead, the suicide bomber drove his car and hit the Stryker when about twenty children were jumping up and down and waving at the soldiers.

Major Bieger, I had seen him help rescue some of our guys a week earlier during another big attack, took some of our soldiers and rushed this little girl to our hospital. He wanted her to have American surgeons and not go to the Iraqi hospital. She didn't make it. I snapped this picture when Major Bieger ran to take her away.

The soldiers went back to the neighborhood the next day to ask what they could do. The people were very warming and welcomed us into their homes, and kids were actually running up to say hello and to ask soldiers to shake hands.

Eventually, some insurgents must have realized we were back and started shooting at us. The American soldiers and Iraqi police started engaging the enemy and there was a running gun battle. I saw at least one Iraqi police who was shot, but he looked okay and actually smiled at me despite the bullet hole in his leg. I smiled back.

One thing seems certain: The people in that neighborhood share our feelings about the terrorists. We are going to go back there, and if any terrorists come out, the soldiers hope to find them. Everybody is still very angry that the insurgents attacked us when the kids were around. Their day will come.

Mr. President, it is stories like this one that reaffirm why Americans are so proud of our troops and proud of the Iraqi people for embracing democracy and supporting our efforts to defeat terrorism. U.S. troops are not seen as occupiers, as some in our country would have you believe. Our soldiers are standing beside Iraqi forces, and their sacrifice to win the war on terror will never be diminished.

We are fighting an enemy who is willing to make a point of killing innocent children. There will be no freedom if we cut and run. We know why we are there, and we will complete the mission.

This story shows so much about how our troops feel. And if any person in this country talks to troops who have returned from Iraq, they will tell you similar stories about the feelings of the Iraqi people. Iraqis often are under threat of death if they are talking to American soldiers or trying to do something productive that would move their country forward, such as voting on a constitution, which they did in droves. They are standing firm despite the threats.

Our troops are going through the process of teaching the Iraqi police and the Iraqi soldiers how to help themselves, how to work the equipment, and how to counter insurgents who would wait until children are in the picture before choosing to blow themselves up.

This is an enemy that we must not let stay on this Earth. We must eradicate it wherever it is. And we must make sure that it does not come to America because if this enemy would wait until children are surrounding our soldiers to do their heinous crimes, what would they do if they came back

to America to attack our people? How heinous would their crimes be here?

Our President is trying to make sure they do not have that opportunity, that they will not be able to perpetrate their horrible and indecent acts against the people of America on our soil. Our President is taking every step to assure that Americans are secure.

So I think it is time for us to stop the partisan bickering. No one in their right mind would suggest that this is a time for America to turn and run. So let's try to work together to make sure we are doing everything possible to help the Iraqi people get on their feet, hold their elections, and begin the process of self-government.

Nothing will eradicate terrorism more quickly than showing that democracy and self-governance can work. That is what our President is leading our country and our troops in the field to provide: Safety and security for the Iraqi people so they can govern themselves. The Iraqi people are moving forward with a constitution they have written and they have voted for, which will be followed by more elections of a parliament and leaders who will take this constitution and make the laws that will give freedom to every Iraqi. Freedom is something which they have not known—many of them—in their lifetimes. It is a worthy cause because it will also assure the security of the American people in future generations.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1042, which the clerk will report.

The journal clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1042) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Chambliss amendment No. 2433, to reduce the eligibility age for receipt of non-regular military service retired pay for members of the Ready Reserve in active federal status or on active duty for significant periods.

Ensign amendment No. 2443, to restate United States policy on the use of riot control agents by members of the Armed Forces.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The journal clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.